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Development of Socialism from Science
to Action





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The Development of Socialism from Science to Action

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The Development of Socialism from Science to Action

The Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science.

What is Communism? This question is answered by the young Friedrich Engels in a sketch of the Communist Manifesto in the year 1847: "Communism is the theory of the conditions for the victory of the working class." According to this definition, which in itself contains the pervading spirit of scientific Socialism, the whole work of Marx and Engels consisted in seeking, in the development of capitalistic society, the development of the conditions for the final victory of the working class, in order to make of it a starting point for Communist activity. In this manner the development from Utopia into Science was accomplished.

The predecessors of Marx and Engels, the Utopian Socialists, have accomplished much in the characterizing of bourgeois society. The grim Fourier, who scourged himself and divested himself of all masks, the Faust-like gifted Saint-Simon, who illuminated whole epochs of human history in a few words; Owen, who penetrated deeply into the nature of man and exhibited his dependence on economic conditions in his writings and his speeches — all of them contributed blocks for building the mighty edifice of scientific Socialism. Without them Marx would have been impossible. But in spite of the deeply penetrating criticism of capitalist society, the predecessors of Marx did not understand how this very society could furnish those mass forces which would overthrow it. For this reason, they had to play the role of historic prophecy, and to work out a plan for the rescue of humanity from the claws of Capitalism, a plan the only weakness of which was, that the architect was missing who could by means of it erect that temple of humanity to Heaven. Marx and Engels showed how the development

of the powers of production under the rule of Capitalism would result in ever increasing anarchy and enslavement of the masses, but also how by means of the concentration of industry, the formation of a strong working class and the realization by them intellectually and emotionally of the coming of a new order, and the strong will to attain it, the foundations of Socialism would also be created. Marx and Engels showed the international proletariat the historic necessity of its victory—the victory of Socialism. At the same time they showed it also that this victory of the disinherited and the enslaved was not going to fall mechanically into their lap when a certain stage of historic development had been reached, but that the workers must prepare themselves for this victory in the sweat of their brows, by the uninterrupted struggles of their brains, fighting day by day against the bourgeoisie in all spheres of social life, in order then in the direct revolutionary struggle, class against class, to conquer. This final revolutionary struggle which will result in the iron dictatorship of the proletariat, this alone will guide the workers into the promised land of Socialism.

The theory of Marx and Engels as to the conditions of the victory of the proletariat remains true, it has been untouched by the tooth of time, it stands like a granite boulder. The seventy years which separate us from the day on which these magnificent young men saw the future of mankind sharply illumined and pointed it out to us in the unforgettable Communist Manifesto, have caused many changes in the capitalist structure, to comprehend which has been the not always well performed task of successors of Marx. But the outlines of the development have not changed and only at the present time, during the first Socialist Revolution which the world has ever experienced, do we really comprehend the theory of Communism. Through the first Socialist revolution, through its stern necessities, we can see the splendid proof of the prophetic power of the intellect of our teachers. Communism is a theory of revolution and therefore it can only be understood in its entire significance during a period of revolution. On this

account we can see that in the long period of quiet development which preceded the era of revolution only a few keen intellects were in a position to comprehend the theory of Communism so completely and clearly as when, during the revolutionary epoch of rising Capitalism, it was born in the brains of those children of the period of storm and stress, in the brains of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

In the epoch of quiet development the **most diverse non-Communitistic elements were mixed with Communism**, and so under the name of **Social Democracy**, different **substitutes for Communism** were created which the international working class must discard if it wishes to be equal to its duty. It is the diluted and false Communism from which the living spirit has been purged, which makes it difficult for the workers to understand and take to heart the theories of the Russian Revolution. On that account, one of the first duties in the proletarian struggle for freedom is to free the teachings of Communism from all impurities. This can be done very easily if we learn to understand historically the development of the separate falsifications of Communism, if we learn to know the conditions under which they arose.

The Falsification of Communism.

The theory of Marx, the outlines of which were created in the 50's of the preceding century, was not disseminated among wide circles until the 80's. When in the 60's and 70's the German working class movement was started under the leadership of Ferdinand Lassalle, the workers were not acquainted with a single one of Marx's writings. The ideas of Communism became familiar to them through the small, inflammatory pamphlets of Lassalle, in which the theory of Communism, if not entirely falsified, was yet very peculiarly presented. Ferdinand Lassalle wanted to stir up the working class at a time when an epoch of capitalist prosperity had strengthened the counter-revolutionary forces in all Europe and made it possible for them to solve all the problems with which at the time they were confronted.

In Germany the Junkers, together with the larger bourgeoisie, were occupied with the at that time important problem of creating a unified capitalist state. The forces which tried in the year 1848 by revolutionary means to found a united German Republic proved themselves too weak, and what they were not in a position to accomplish — the founding of the German state as an organ of the German bourgeoisie — was accomplished by the bourgeoisie and the Junkers. They executed this task by rearing the reactionary structure of a bureaucratic-capitalistic federation of states, in which a clique of big capitalists, together with the Junkers and the Generals, with the Hohenzollerns at the head, guided the destiny of the German Empire. At such a time, Lassalle was trying to make the working class into a power, which, even though it had not the power to guide the destinies of the German people, could still be in a position to wring concessions from the governing class. The Communist propaganda was directed to this narrow object, as Lassalle disseminated it among the workers. In order to be able to get across as much of his propaganda as possible in spite of the oppression prevailing in the reactionary period of Bismarck, he attempted to give Communism as innocent a look as possible. The young lion whose paws were not yet in a state to deal death to the enemy, was to be led upon the meadows disguised as a lamb. Lassalle tried to present Communism as a movement which could succeed by peaceful means. By means of the ballot, the workers were to gain influence over the state and were to use it to organize co-operative societies which gradually would change a capitalist society into a socialist society. This propaganda developed in the workers a respect for the idea of the State regardless of whether the State was in the hands of the capitalists or of the victorious workers. This idea was indeed put to a severe test in so far as the relations with the Bismarck Government were concerned during the era of the fierce persecutions of the workers movement in the period from 1878 to 1880, when the violent pressure from above, and the baiting of the workers' movement created intense hatred against the capitalist state in the front

ranks of the workers' movement and hope nourished by this hatred that it would soon crumble as the result of the blows of the Social Revolution. This mood of the working class was increased by the long drawn-out crisis which existed in the economic life of Europe during the 80's. But this was only an interruption in the process of the reformistic falsifying of Communism which had been going on since the establishment of the capitalistic states in the 70's. As soon as the workers had somewhat recovered from the blows dealt them, as soon as they were a little stronger and the fiercest forms of capitalist persecution disappeared, the process of diluting and falsifying Communism took on the wildest range. The rapid economic development, the period of prosperity of Capitalism, as it everywhere in the last ten years of the preceding century gained a foothold, especially in the domain of the electric and the metal industry, contributed to this. Since the 80's, thanks to the development of American agriculture, the prices of grain fell, and now wages began to rise under the influence of an active movement of business. The front ranks of the workers saw before them a path strewn with roses. The Governments were obliged to cease their persecutions, they began to promise social reforms. The workers everywhere won representation in the Parliaments; the aristocracy of the working class earned good wages; and so the idea became a fixed one to them: the Revolution is a superseded phase in bourgeois development. The working class will force the bourgeoisie to make more and more concessions, which will finally change the economic system of Capitalism into a system which shall exist for the advantage of the workers. This decision found expression first in opportunistic parliamentary practice, in the policy of the parliamentarian labor leaders, who hoped by flirting with the bourgeoisie, by limiting their demands, by giving up revolutionary propaganda to be able gradually to better the condition of the workers. Then this tendency found its theoretical expression in the **doctrine of reformism** (revisionism), as coined by **Bernstein** in Germany, **Sarante** and **Jaures** in France, **Treves** and **Turati** in Italy.

The Collapse of Reformist Illusions.

But the same evolution which, according to the conviction of the reformists, was to do away with the necessity of a revolution, soon showed to the workers the utter absurdity of the reformistic illusions. The Junkers defended themselves against the growing competition of the young agrarian nations by raising the price of food by means of agrarian tariffs. The development of Capitalism led to the formation of trusts and cartels, big capitalist organizations, which pushed aside and conquered not only the crafts but also the middle class. For the protection of the cartels they demanded for industry also a high tariff. They united with the Junkers to rob and plunder the people; at the same time the growing trustification of industry meant an enormous extension of power for the capitalists — against the unions. The same unions which could without much trouble force the small textile baron to yield to their demands, were powerless against the iron and coal kings, who commanded more than tens of thousands of workmen. If the worker in a textile factory was dissatisfied with his wages, he could find work in some other factory. The trustified coal and iron barons did not recognize the unions, they held fast together against each demand of their workers and understood how to guard themselves against the workers by means of black-lists. The aggravation of the antagonisms between proletariat and bourgeoisie, in the factory as well as in the consumers' market, was still further intensified by the imperialist policy, which threatened to turn the struggle of the trustified industries of the world, the struggle of wages and of capital, into military war. The growing burden of taxation, caused by the growth of militarism and navalism, the growing danger of war which became ever more intense, conflicts with the unions, led the possessing classes to adopt a sharper policy against the working class. **Because exploitation grew, oppressive measures had to be intensified also.** The growing political reaction had the effect on the working class of a **storm signal** and showed them in all countries that not revolutionary Communism, but, on the contrary, the so-called “real” Reformism

was a Utopia, not, to be sure, one that would give wings to the soul, that would stimulate the energies of the workers, that would make the journey of humanity seem shorter in the visions it presents, so that the sluggish ones might be encouraged to hasten their steps, but on the contrary one that would lame their stride, transforming them into creeping beasts.

Since the great strike in the Ruhr district, since the great fights of the electric workers in Berlin, and the violent agitation of the French workers for the attainment of the eight-hour day, the great faith of the workers in the peaceful evolution to Socialism disappeared. They saw now how the forces of Capitalism had been uniting against the proletariat in economic life as well as in political life, they saw how the bourgeois parties were solidifying more and more into a reactionary mass, they saw how the entire bourgeois society was moving toward the abyss of war, they saw how parliaments were becoming constantly less able to cope with the development, if for no other reason, then because they were themselves being forced in all countries to resign their powers in favor of secret cabinets in which bureaucracy in combination with the sharks of Capital settled the most vital affairs of the people.

The fires of the Russian Revolution of the year 1905 showed the masses of Europe what latent power can be summoned by the working class when it arises and when it is disposed to throw its personality into the fight for the cause. Since the year 1905 the problem of the struggle for power, i. e., the problems of the Socialist revolution, which were brought up in a theoretical way in the discussion of reformism (Kautsky's pamphlet on the "Social Revolution", published in the year 1903), were present in the consciousness of the masses of the people.

In Search of the Way to Power.

An anxious search began for the exit out of the blind alley into which capitalistic evolution had blundered. The first question before the toiling masses was, "Where are we going?"

The question was answered by developments as clearly and precisely as one could wish. In France the attempt to better the condition of the workers through co-operation with the bourgeoisie turned out a complete failure. Millerand's entrance into the bourgeois government was of no advantage to the working class and led to the compromising of Socialism in the eyes of the masses of workers. The result of the elections 1907 showed the workers that the bourgeois parties would unite into a solid block against them as soon as it became a question of Imperialism, that is, a question of the extension of capitalist power over weaker peoples, and of the armed competitive struggle between the capitalist states. The facts of the economic crisis of the year 1900 spoke so plainly, that so well known a Reformist as Max Schippel could not end his investigation of the course of the economic crisis in any other way than by the assertion of the intensification of the class struggle in the whole world. Karl Kautsky summed up the entire development in the year 1908 in his work "The Road to Power", in which he proved that the whole capitalist world was moving in the direction of a frightful world crisis, that we were on the eve of the Socialist Revolution. This conviction, which became more and more rooted in the minds of the foremost ranks of the workers, faced them with this second question: What means will the workers use to defend themselves when the new situation arises, and what means will they use when they launch the attack on the fortresses of Capital? Already in 1905 the German and Austrian proletariat had worked its way through to the idea of the mass strike. Regardless of the complete ossification of the intellectual life of the leaders of the party, whose quiet, petty-bourgeois lives reflected the mood of the working class very faintly, the workers had recognized in the mass strike a means of defense against the attacks on the fundamental rights of the working class (the German Social Democracy in Jena, 1905), or even a means of attack by the proletariat against particularly obstinate opponents (the Austrian Social Democracy). The mass strike as a general strike was exalted by the French syndicalists

as a means of conquering complete liberty. The working class, which, up to this time, had battled only politically in parliaments, began to reflect on their role in the process of production, on the words of Freiligrath: "Every wheel shall stop, at the will of your mighty arm".

For years the leaders of the left wing of the workers discussed the conditions that would make practicable the use of the general strike. Should the leaders of the workers' organizations decide upon the strike if parliamentary action should fail, if the enemy through his reckless policy should drive the masses to despair — should it be a pistol, then, held in readiness to back up the parliamentary struggle, or should it be the actual mode of the struggle itself, emerging spontaneously out of the increasingly acute class conflicts, prepared not in the conference chambers of the leaders but preparing every hour in the shops and in the factory prisons — not only through the growing agitation, the **stimulated action** of the proletariat. These were the questions to which the left wing of the international labor movement devoted itself most intensively during the years preceding the World War. And right at this point it appeared that even in this simple question the Socialist ranks, the ranks that fought under the banner of Marx, were divided, the one section under the leadership of Karl Kautsky outwardly embracing the approaching Socialist revolution, it is true, yet anxiously avoiding the intensifying of the class struggle, although the internal and external situation of the proletariat positively demanded it.

In this struggle to find the way to power the question came up here and there, **"Wherein shall the power of the victorious workers express itself?"** But nowhere was the question given a positive hearing, and for very simple reasons. First upon the order of business of history came the question of the mobilization of the battalions of workers, the question of their general objective, and not of the halting-places to be passed through on the way. In order to prove the necessity of the general strike, the radical Socialists pointed to the collapse of parliamentarism. They showed how it was more and more

becoming a stronghold of the capitalistic highwaymen; they criticised very sharply the **pseudo-republicanism** and the **pseudo-democracy** of the republican countries, and frequently the question arose, "How shall capitalistic democracy and its parliamentary agencies be converted into agencies of power of the victorious proletariat?" When Anton Pannekoek, the clearest head of West European Socialism, answered the question by saying, that one must destroy the democratic forms of the capitalistic state and must create new organs of power of the working people in the fires of the proletarian revolution, he was accused by Karl Kautsky, the most authoritative Marxian theoretician, of being an anarchist. However correct the answer of Pannekoek may have been, it was only half an answer. It pointed to the fact that the organs of compulsion used by the capitalist state must be destroyed, but it did not show what organs of control the proletariat must build in order to carry on and assure its victory.

While the majority of even the revolutionary Socialists saw in democracy the means by which Socialism would gain the victory, the Syndicalists, representing the revolutionary theory of those countries in which the bankruptcy of democracy had brought about the complete disillusionment of the masses of the people, pointed to the labor unions as the agency which should win the power and become the wielders of the power of the masses.

This problem, as has been said, was put only sporadically by those intellects who were able to see beyond the confines of the present time and could not be answered by them. The historic solutions are never found by the theoreticians of the working class, they can only be discovered in the revolutionary struggle of the masses; to the theoretician is left only the duty of grasping the practical measures of the proletariat, to make them common knowledge and to make them the universal object of the struggle of the proletariat, the solution of its struggle.

The Lessons of the World War.

Before the working class could be confronted with the

problem of its organs of power, they first were compelled to experience all the consequences of their powerlessness — physical powerlessness in the literal sense. They had to wade through the horrors of war, to be torn in pieces by grenades; they had to bleed to death for the interests of the capitalists; they had to heap up mountains of corpses, in order that the lesson: Capitalism leads to the bloodiest anarchy, to the destruction of the few cultural achievements which have been created, to the deepest misery of the masses and their literal enslavement, so that this lesson might be converted out of a theoretical thesis into a crying and burning certainty, at least in the minds of the front ranks of the working class.

The theoretical propaganda of the revolutionary Social Democrats, experience, the defeats which capital had inflicted upon the workers since the end of the last century, did not suffice to encourage the workers to aspire to more activity than the first timid step forward. The opportunistic policy of the leaders of the workers' movement lulled the front ranks of the workers' aristocracy to sleep, a sleep which proved that the elite of the workers found themselves in a very favorable condition. The lower strata of the working class, though, were too ignorant, too helpless, to be in a position to throw themselves into a revolution without the bureaucracy of the party and the unions, or against their will. So there came the long awaited beast of war and began to teach the proletariat with its claws that lesson which it had not understood when revolutionary Socialism was preaching it.

The Russian people is the first which has understood this lesson and has drawn from it the consequences, and this it accomplished by means of the Revolution. The Russian Revolution is the first response of the proletariat to the World War, it is the advocate and the forerunner of the international Revolution, it gives the answer to the riddles which the Sphinx of the Revolution has been giving Socialism to solve for the last century, to the question which the working class must answer, if it does not wish to be torn to pieces. The fact that the Russian proletariat through its Revolution is making the

first steps on the road of the development of Socialism from science into action means that at the same time that Revolution marks a mighty stride in the development of the science of Communism. Communism is the theory of the condition for the victory of the working class. These conditions become clearest in the process of victory, on that account the comprehension of the Russian Revolution is a preliminary condition of the development of Communism from a science into action.

The Lessons of the Russian Revolution—The Ripening of Capitalism and the Social Revolution.

The first question of the Social Revolution which confronts the working class is this: **When can the Social Revolution come?** As Marxism showed the workers that the victory of Socialism is dependent on the development of the forces of production, a perverted conception became rooted in the ranks of the Marxists that the Social Revolution would only then become possible when Capitalism had the entire economic life of the nation in its grasp, when, so to say, it had divided it relentlessly into a small group of capitalists and oppressed proletariat. Yes, those who were the most consistent in their falsification of Communism, the revisionists, declared that Socialism could not come in Europe until capital had subjugated the entire world: on that fact they based — as is well known — the necessity of having the working class support the colonial policy. The whole argument of the pseudo-Socialist parties of Russia, which rallied to the support of the bourgeoisie during the Revolution, and since the Workers' Revolution have fought in the ranks of the counter-revolutionists — the Mensheviks — consists of this fact: Socialism in Russia is impossible because the proletariat does not constitute a majority of the Russian nation. This argument won much approbation in Europe from those who had made out of Marxism a mechanical arithmetical problem. But to show the absurdity of this attitude it will suffice to point out that in Germany, the European state most highly developed economically, men as scientifically important as Heinrich Cunow

are of the opinion that the maintenance of such an attitude to the question is not so much due to the few more percent more or less of proletarians in relation to non-proletarians, but rather to a **completely nebulous conception of the transition from Capitalism to Socialism**. The hypothesis of a conception such as Cunow gives on the question of the stage of ripeness of Capitalism, gives rise to the idea that Capitalism will in fact do the work of socialization itself, and that Socialism will simply be invited to a table already set. When Cunow explains that Germany is not yet ripe for Socialism, he supports this theory by referring to the fact that the capitalist state must first take over all industry before the proletariat could receive it by seizing the reins of the government. But why should not the proletariat be in a position to take the cartelized and trustified industries directly out of the hands of the capitalized trusts and industries? Of course, if the proletariat is going to seize power only when, as Bernard Shaw says, a brainless, apelike, degenerate, capitalist master by pressing on a button can set in motion millions of men who have become slaves, it will have a very easy task to chase away the brainless monkey-master from the keys of the central apparatus and dash in his brains. But this simplification of its task the proletariat would have to pay for with all those sufferings which a policy of watchful waiting would impose upon them, watching how Capitalism strides mechanically over the bodies of millions. To the honor of mankind be it said that the idea of a mechanical transition from Capitalism to Socialism is contradicted by all hitherto existing historical conceptions, as also does every sensible theory of the possibility of capitalist evolution. The earlier forms of economic life did not collapse only after they had prepared the way for an entirely new order, but as soon as they became an oppressive hindrance to the new order.

The transition from Capitalism to Socialism begins when capitalist society causes so much suffering to the people that they are ready to break with the even tenor of life and rise up against the domination of capital, when the masses can no longer endure the conditions created by capitalist society.

When capitalist development in a country has reached a point where the most important branches of industry, those of credit and transportation, are controlled by a concentrated, capitalistic group, then the proletariat which has rebelled not only can but must try to take over industry into its own hands, into the hands of the victorious proletariat, a proletariat organized into the governing power. The proletariat will model the economic life of the country to a greater or lesser extent for its own benefit, according to the degree of capitalist penetration of the economic life of that country, or it will perhaps have temporarily to restrict itself to the socialization of the already concentrated branches of the administration, while it gradually may take over the other, for instance, the administration of land (thanks to its lack of dependence on the socialized centers of industry, thanks to its independence of the city), and socialize it. This is the state of things in Russia. In Russia the proletariat is certainly a minority of the population, but the Russian iron industry, the coal mines, and the naphtha production, the railroads, the telegraphs are concentrated in a few hands, they are directed by a small number of banks, and they dictate the economic laws of the whole agrarian population.

The unbearable situation which Capitalism created in the world war, brought the masses of the people into the struggle against the Czaristic capitalistic state. With the help of the peasants, who bled to death for Capitalism during three years, the workers succeeded in gaining power in the government. What should they do with this power? The advocates of the mechanical idea that Socialism is possible only after nine-tenths of the people have become proletarians, tried to make it clear to the people that it was impossible to establish Socialism. Back to Capitalism, that was the solution of the Mensheviks. But the workers could not return to Capitalism without throwing the country into the greatest misery. Should the capitalists return to power, they would impose the expenses of the war upon the workers, forcing them to work twelve hours a day in order to liquidate these burdens and raise the expenses of re-armament for the next war. They would not

put an end to the confusion of the economic life of the country but only shift the consequences of this confusion upon the workers.' The communistic system of economy is the utilization of all the forces of production according to a distinct plan, in the interest of the masses of the people. **Just because the country has been unbelievably shattered through the war, Communism is the only way by which the workers can hope to emerge from the want and misery of the shattered capitalistic society.** To forego beforehand the chance to organize this economic life in its own interest would mean to rush into capitalistic misery for fear that the inexperienced proletariat would be incapable of directing the main forces of national economic life concentrated by Capitalism. This would not only be historical suicide but is furthermore **impossible-practically.** What does the return to Capitalism mean? It means in the first place giving back the power of the state to the capitalists, for naturally a proletarian state could not undertake to protect capitalistic profits. The purpose of showing this is to **reveal the whole utopianism of the solution "back to Capitalism."** It was certainly not chance that the Russian proletariat took the power into its hands in November 1917. The proletariat conquered power because the capitalistic regime had lost all confidence not only in the eyes of the proletarian but also of the agrarian masses. The first representatives of Russian capital, the Guchkovs, Milyukovs, Tereshchenkos, and their Socialist fig-leaves, the Tseretellis, Kerenskys, and Chernovs, were so hateful to the masses of the people that the people drove them away. Had the workers not seized the reins of power, the representatives of Capitalism would not have been one whit more able to master the situation. Russia would have sailed without a rudder into the sea of anarchy, headed for chaos, out of which the star of Socialism could not have crystalized, but also not a capitalist regime either. Russia was simply the **prey of foreign capital**, which is certainly not "riper", or more called upon to "set in order" the disrupted country in the interests of the masses of the people than the young, but energetic Russian proletariat itself.

Austria and Italy find themselves in the same situation as Russia, and the experience of the Russian Revolution teaches that the **Social Revolution by no means will begin in the place where Capitalism is at its highest stage of development.** Even the strongest capitalistic organization is not able to protect the masses from the unspeakable sufferings which capitalist anarchy creates, it is much better suited, as the government of the young capitalist countries, to hold the masses down.

The Socialist Revolution starts first in those countries in which the capitalist organization is not so strong. Those capitalist countries with the most unsettled organs for oppression are the **breaches where Socialism may break through,** there the social revolution will begin. It is difficult for it to break through within the national boundaries, because after crushing its own bourgeoisie, it is threatened by the bourgeoisie of the remaining capitalist countries. The Socialist Revolution can only be successful if it breaks out on the entire continent; but as the Socialist Revolution cannot wait until the proletariat of the whole world rises to one single call, on the contrary, as national Socialist revolutions are themselves a product of international, capitalist disintegration, they furnish the accelerating element. In this way the answer is given to the first question which confronts the international proletariat: When can the Socialist Revolution begin? **It can and will begin in every country in which the conditions created by capital for the working class become unbearable.** The sufferings of the people jeer at the statistics of Cunow and Company, and the volcanoes of revolution are not waiting until the scholastic statisticians of Also-Marxism give them a signal. Whoever proves to the masses of the people by means of tables of statistics the impossibility of the Socialist Revolution, shows that he **u n d e r s t a n d s** Marx not at all. Friedrich Engels may have made a mistake when he thought in the 80's that the end of Capitalism was at hand. But the possibility of such a mistake shows that he had nothing to do with this statistical conception of his and Marx's theory. This

ossification of Marx was an offense easily explained during the peaceful evolution of Capitalism; after the experience of the Russian workers' revolution it is not only a product of counter-revolutionary state of mind, but it is also, as the experience of the Russians shows, a counter-revolutionary Utopia. All the adjurations with the falsified spirit of Marx could not save the political necks of the Tseretellis and Dans. They were cast on the manure-heap of history by the same proletariat which is "still unripe for the Social Revolution," and from this place they may spit upon the revolution of the Russian working class, but they cannot impede its progress. The revolution may temporarily be conquered by European capital if the European proletariat does not make use of the same weapons which the Russian proletariat made use of, within a reasonable time. But that it is a proletarian revolution, and that it is trying to overcome heroically the anarchistic-capitalistic economic methods through Socialist organization, that it is, therefore, a Socialist revolution, which can only be put down by the Attilas of imperialism, neither the Mensheviki nor their European parrots can deny, just as little as they can disclaim its Socialistic character: for its Socialist character shines above it like a star of destiny, it was created with iron necessity out of the imperialistic character of the war.

The Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

The Socialist Workers' Revolution in Russia shows the European proletariat the way which leads to power. The press of world capital is crying that this is bloody, is yelling about the rough, violent character of the Revolution. It has every right to do so. It was created by Capital to be an organ of the battle against the working class, and it is its duty to throw dirt upon and to spit upon the first workers' Revolution, in order to frighten the workers of the other countries with its Medusa head. But how comes it that the Axelrods, Martofis, and the—**risum teneatis!**—Kautskys use the violence of the Revolution as a ground of complaint against it? **They**

used to defend the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat against the Reformists.

What does dictatorship mean? Dictatorship is the form of government by which one class forces its will ruthlessly on the other class. During the period of social evolution, in which one class is preparing itself for the struggle for power, it foregoes the use of force because it is too weak to use force. It is only gathering together, concentrating its powers, and on this account it is not necessary for the ruling class to use open force against it. The ruling class only holds its forces in readiness, but it gives the class which is striving upward a certain room for development, as long as it does not consider this class dangerous. From the moment when the ruling class lays burdens on the oppressed class, which are so heavy that the ruling class fears a possible uprising of the oppressed, it puts into play the machinery of force. The war laid burdens such as these on the masses of the workers, and on that account it brought with it the suspension of the few scanty rights enjoyed by the working class in the time of peace, that is, it brought the Dictatorship of Imperialism, which cost the workers millions of lives. In order to break the dictatorship of Imperialism the working class must employ force: force brings about the Revolution. But no hitherto existing ruling class can be conquered at one blow. Beaten once, it attempts to rise again, and it can do so because the victory of Revolution is by no means able to alter the economic system of Society in an instant, to tear out by the roots the power of the deposed class. The Social Revolution is a lengthy process, which begins with the dethronement of the capitalist class, but ends only with the transformation of the capitalist system into a workers' community. This process will require at least a generation in every country, and this space of time is precisely the period of the proletarian dictatorship, the period during which the proletariat must keep the capitalist in subjection with the one hand, while it can use the other for the work of Socialist construction.

Everything that is being said, on the ground of principle, against the rule by force of the Russian working class, means nothing else than the disavowal not only of the teachings of Marx, but of the plainest facts of the past. When a Renner does not blush to assert with scientific mien that the political revolution—that is, the employment of brute force—contradicts the character of the Socialist revolution, because the Socialist revolution demands the organization of a new economic system and not force, that only means that this former Marxist, with the Lassallean enthusiasm for the state, is not a worshipper of the state idea after the manner of Lasalle, as he has been characterized, but an ordinary capitalistic sophist. Just because the Social Revolution must transform the entire economic system of Capitalism, which gave to one class unheard-of privileges, it must necessarily arouse the strongest opposition of this class, an opposition which can only be broken by the use of guns. And the stronger Capitalism is developed in a country, just so much more ruthless, just so much wilder will the defensive struggle be, just so much bloodier the proletarian revolution, and just so much more ruthless the measures by means of which the victorious working class will hold down the defeated capitalist class. But the mollusks from the "Also-Marxist" camp, the opponents of the Russian workers' revolution, answer us that it is not a question of refusing to recognize the principle of proletarian dictatorship, but that they decline to recognize the dictatorship in a country where the proletariat is in the minority, and where the dictatorship degenerates into a rule of the minority over the majority, as is supposed by them to be the case in Russia. This argument is a cowardly evasion.

Never, in any country, will the Revolution begin as an act of the majority of the population. Capitalism never signifies the physical control of the means of production only, everywhere it signifies simultaneously the intellectual control of the masses of the people, even in the most highly developed capitalist countries. Under the pressure of misery and want, under

the convulsing of the masses by such means as the war, all the oppressed and the exploited do not rise at once. The most active, a minority, rises, accomplishes the Revolution, and its success depends upon whether this Revolution follows the line of historic development, that is whether it responds to the needs of the masses, who can then sever themselves from the former ruling class. The creative and dynamic force of the Revolution was necessary to arouse the masses of the people, to free them from the intellectual slavery of Capitalism, to bring them into that camp which was defending their interests.

One might say : **every Revolution is begun by the minority, the majority rallies to its aid while the revolution is going on,** and so determines its victory. Were it not so, the dictatorship in a country like Russia, which possesses a proletarian minority, would not only be harmful as the Kautskys maintain, but in a country with a proletarian majority, to which the Kautskys graciously permit the dictatorship, it would be unnecessary. In these countries the capitalist class forms such a very small minority, that it would not be able to use weapons against the proletariat. **The Marxian theory of the unavailability of the proletarian dictatorship as a way to Socialism, is, therefore, either super-annuated, or this dictatorship is as much justified in Russia as in another country.**

Revolution and Counter-revolution.

The Russian Revolution has shown us not only the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, but also the concrete forms which the resistance of the bourgeoisie takes, in fact, it shows us in general, the typical features of a Workers' Revolution. Friedrich Engels, in his "anti-Duehring" has pointed out the process by which Capitalism breeds militarism, militarizes the entire population (i. e., puts it at the mercy of the drill-master), simultaneously, however, creating those elements that destroy militarism by means of the class opposition in the army. This opposition, at a certain point in the historical process, causes the

army, which is the sword of capital, to go to pieces in the latter's hand, by dividing the army into its proletarian and bourgeois components, into a Red Army and a White Army.

This the pupils of Marx and Engels forget when they continually cite the remark which Engels made in his introduction to the *Class Wars in France*, in which Engels draws attention to the wide streets, etc., which will make an uprising so much more difficult. The Russian Revolution showed how the rising may occur on the field of battle, as well as in the trenches, not to speak of the streets; for the revolutionary idea may grip the hearts of the soldiers and form them into mass columns which march against the capitalistic elements of the army and of society. The Russian Revolution showed also how the attempt to organize new armies out of the capitalistic and the undecided elements, is one of the **principal methods adopted by the bourgeois counter-revolutionists**. In the more highly developed capitalistic countries, with a well-fed, strongly capitalistic peasantry, this tendency of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie will result directly in the struggle between the regiments from the peasant-capitalist localities and the proletarian regiments. **The civil war between the Revolution and the Counter-Revolution will be a war in the literal sense of the word.** The development of the Proletarian Revolution will change the imperialist fronts into revolutionary and counter-revolutionary fronts. The German attack on the Ukraine and the French-English-Japanese attack on Russia is an indication of this evolution. The development of the Revolution and Counter-Revolution will bring up the problem of the **strategy of the Socialist Revolution**. The Russian Revolution shows in what way this question will develop. If the Russian Revolution suffers from the fact that it has no corps of officers, that it is compelled to educate the workers to be army administrators as well as factory administrators, that is not merely a Russian problem. **De te fabula narratur**—so speak the experiences of the Russian Revolution to the European proletariat but at the same time these experiences show that,

eventually, the Revolution is unconquerable from a military standpoint also. It conquers by the fact that the **bourgeoisie**, being a small minority, cannot get together a counter-revolutionary army out of purely bourgeois elements, that it is compelled to take deluded proletarian elements also, elements which, while the battle with the armies of the Revolution is going on, will deteriorate, and sooner or later will rally to the side of the Revolution.

Just as it was not only power on which the rule of the bourgeoisie was based, but also on its function as the administrator of production, just so it does not try to overcome the proletariat by armed power alone, but also by the **sabotage of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intelligentsia**. This sabotage, which in Russia reached its highest point in the period from the November uprising to March, is not a Russian product. From it the European proletariat may take a hint. And when the eunuchs of Marxism point to the fact that up to the present time the Russian proletariat has not been able to organize production on a Socialistic basis, they are only mocking themselves without knowing it. Everywhere the bourgeois **intelligentsia** places the greatest hindrance in the way of the proletariat in its work of organization, and nowhere will the proletariat, even the most highly developed, be in a position, in a short time, to find the abilities in its own ranks, which will be necessary to accomplish the work of Socialist organization. In the much praised land of organization, in Germany, the number of workers who would be able today to guide whole branches of production is extraordinarily small, even the number of workers who would be able, as technicians, to administer the production of a factory is very small. Everyone knows this who has ever been active in the German workers' movement. The working class of every country will only be able to educate itself through thousands of mistakes, and nowhere will it be able to do without the services of bourgeois specialists. They will be forced, just as the Russian working class was forced, to adopt the measures of an iron dictatorship,

in order to drive the bourgeois elements into the service of the workers.

No proletariat will be spared the struggle which has forced the Russian working class to take the sharpest measures of a dictatorship; the **struggle for bread**. Nowhere will the peasants range themselves on the side of the Revolution, less in capitalist countries than they did in Russia, where the Revolution gave them land and soil. **As the Revolution develops from a military standpoint, into a struggle between the workers' regiments and the regiments of the peasants, so also from the social standpoint, it will be fought out between the workers and peasants for bread; until the conquered peasantry learns that a Socialist society can offer them a life more worthy of a human being than a capitalist society can.**

Democracy or the Rule of the Working Class.

And this in a word indicates clearly enough what a mighty obstinacy or what an enormous lack of sense one must have in order to accuse the Russian Revolution of harming poor Democracy. Concretely considered, Democracy is the rule of Capital, and it is so strong, so fixed in the minds of the masses that it can allow itself the luxury of permitting the masses the liberty of discussing the affairs of state. There is, in modern history, no Democracy which goes any further than that, for as soon as the masses make the slightest attempt to convert their liberty of speech into right to decide any question of government, Democracy goes flying. **Modern Democracy is the camouflage for the autocracy of capital.** As the feeble proletariat is interested in free speech, in free voting, in order to collect its forces, it used this democracy and participated freely in the affairs of state, in order to mobilize the masses for Socialism. But abstractly considered, Democracy signifies the rule of the majority of the people. The idea that the proletariat will not begin the revolution until it has proofs that the majority of the people are behind it, is absurd, if only for the fact that capitalist Democracy will never remain unchanged long

enough for the proletariat to assure itself that the majority of the people is behind it. Nowhere do the highly exploited young men and women workers enjoy full rights. If they did, the bourgeoisie would sooner turn out the Parliament, long before the workers reached a point where they could perform the will of the people by peaceful means. But it is really silly to imagine that one could, by peaceful means, through agitation only, without Revolution, overcome the lack of confidence which the masses have in their own power. Only in the Revolution can the front ranks of the workers carry the masses along with them.

But a Revolution means that one class dictates its will to the other class. The conditions which Kautsky and Co. set for a Revolution, are these: **the Revolution, to be sure, has the right to dictate its will to the bourgeoisie, but it is its duty, at the same time, to give the bourgeoisie the possibility, by means of the freedom of the press, and from the vantage of the Constituent Assembly of airing its accusations.** This intellectual demand of a professional kicker, who is not so much concerned with gaining his point as with registering his kick, could be abstractly complied with without harming the Revolution; but the Revolution is a civil war, and classes, who fight each other with cannon and machine guns forego the Homeric battle of words. The Revolution does not argue with its enemies, it crushes them, the counter-revolution does the same, and both of them will know how to bear the reproach of not having followed the order of business of the German Reichstag.

The Soviets—the Token By Which the International Proletariat Will Conquer.

The harsh face which the Russian Revolution shows to the international proletariat, is the same face which, blackened with powder, the international proletariat will itself proudly wear in the near future. **He who is frightened at this face or turns away from it, as from a Medusa's head, will turn away from the proletarian revolution, and away from Socialism.** But

the Russian Revolution not only shows the European proletariat the battles which it must fight its way through, if it does not want to rot away in the trenches, but also the forms, the symbol, by which it will conquer. What form will the dictatorship of the proletariat take in Europe? The form of Soviets, that is, the representation of the workers in the factory, in the city, in the country, and in the nation. That is the form in which the workers of Europe will establish their rule. The idea of the Soviets is as simple as one can imagine it to be. Only history creates such splendid crystallizations. In the factory, the slaves of Capital worked. The factory is bound by a thousand threads with other factories, with the whole economic life of the locality. It is dependent on the transportation of the locality, on the factories which work up its semi-manufactured goods, or from which it receives them, it depends also on all the factories in the same branch of industry. and in the last analysis, on the economic life of the entire country. The representation of the factory, is, consequently, political and economic, the cell of the state mechanism. The representatives of the proletariat of the locality, are, simultaneously, the economic administrators of the locality. But just as the representatives of the workers of the whole country have their policy prescribed for them by the workers of the different localities, but generalize it and make it into laws for the local units of government, in this way having their roots in the local Soviets, but at the same time presenting to the local Soviets the general proletarian interests, just so the general Economic Council, formed from the representatives of the workers is a body which prevents the local Economic Councils from considering merely local interests, but to make them subsidiary to the interests of the whole country. The experiences of the Russian Revolution have shown what was strong and creative in Syndicalism and what was petty-bourgeois and sectarian.

The workers of a factory as masters of the factory might easily begin to work for their own particular interests, and in

this way might become petty-bourgeois. The Economic Soviet of Industry represents in each factory the interests and the needs for expansion of every branch of industry. But it, too, might favor the interests of a certain branch of industry as against the general interests of the working class. The general Economic Soviet, (National Council of Public Economy) which designs the whole economic plan and carries it out, equalizes the interests of the workers, makes the general interest the law. In this manner the sectarian tendencies of Syndicalism are done away with, and simultaneously the problem is solved which Syndicalism disowned and on which it turned its back. The Congress of the Workers Soviets, the Executive Committee of the Workers' Soviets, that is the proletarian governing power; not the means of capitalist oppression, but the fighting arm of the proletariat. **The Soviet Government is not a democratic form of government, it is the form of government of the workers**, it shows its class character clearly, does not veil it with democratic phrases, but it is at the same time the form of government in which the will of the revolutionary working class can express itself clearly, unmistakably and ruthlessly. In this way, the problem which was insoluble in bourgeois democracy, is solved; the problem of the bureaucracy.

Syndicalism turned away from this problem with disgust, it wanted to do away with bureaucracy and its organization—but it could not do away with it; it negated it only in words. In capitalist society the proletariat is doomed to catch only the crumbs which fall from the table of capitalistic science. In capitalist society there had to be even in the workers' movement bureaucrats who alone had the time and leisure to learn the technique of the workers' movement. After Capitalism is shaken off, in the process of the Socialist Revolution, which rouses the proletariat to the very depths, which brings out all its capabilities, the possibility arises for the first time, for the proletariat to manage its own affairs.

The form of the Worker-Delegate Councils, which can al-

ways be reelected, which always return to their native soil, the factory, this form will be the one with which the proletariat will conquer Capitalism, and with which it will become capable of accomplishing Socialism.—And it is more than significant that all the “Marxists,” who carp at the Russian Revolution, have not been able up to the present time to attack the idea of the Soviet Government. In order to do that, they would be compelled to defend the secret chambers in which the bureaucracy, together with the representatives of financial capital, manages the affairs of the state. The parliament is a debating society, a club for gossip. Parliament does not manage any factories, nor build any railroads. **The government machine, which is growing more and more from a police machine into a business office, could have become a bureaucratic, capitalist association, with Parliament as camouflage, otherwise bodies of workers had to be created, who together with professionals could set the economic life in motion and guide it.** While this alternative was clear to everyone who had the least conception of the actual mechanism of the so-called democratic states, the opponents of the Soviet Government had to confine themselves to defending the right of the nation, that is, the bourgeoisie, to have it say, but they did not dare to defend the **very kernel of the system (the actual rule of the united clique of the bureaucracy and the sharks of finance), that is, they had to leave the cardinal question of the form of the Workers’ Revolution completely untouched.** And that is the best proof of the fact that the learned gentlemen were not only not able really to attack the Russian Revolution, but were unable even to grasp it.

The European proletariat will, without doubt, march forward so quickly in the near future that it will not have time to learn the experiences of the Russian Revolution out of learned books, but it will learn them practically, before it is in a position to learn them out of the documents of the Revolution. We, who have the immeasurable good fortune after four years of horror, the horror of the world war, to be living, that is, to be fighting, in the midst of a newly created society, we do

not flatter ourselves that we can be the teachers of the international proletariat. In as far, however, as history gives it a little spare time, in which to study the whole scheme of the Russian Revolution, before it uses this scheme practically on its own account and surpasses it, it is our duty to describe the strivings and doings of the Russian proletariat to the international proletariat. The facts will then speak to the longing heart of the proletariat, to its brain, which believes that facts are facts and need no apology. The Russian Revolution does not need to defend itself before the tribunal of the international proletariat. When Socialism has really fulfilled the longings and strivings of the best proletarians, as we are sure that it has, they will recognize that fact in the Russian Revolution because it is the first step in the development of Socialism from a theory into action. And they have already recognized in the Russian Revolution the fulfilment of their dreams. From San Francisco to Vladivostok, whether one goes by way of the Atlantic or the Pacific, from all points of the world we are receiving proofs daily of the fact that in spite of the lies of the bourgeois press, in spite of the cowardice of the traitors to Socialism, the workers of all countries, when they are just beginning to stir, or just feeling the desire for the struggle, turn their eyes to blood-drenched Russia, to that Russia in which the working class is battling with a world of foes, and, as we hope, to conquer.



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